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conditions in the Kutsiyan concentration camp and coal mine.

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1. After the communists took power on orders from Russia they took care to establish forced labor camps, or as they call them "labor educational communities" where they imprisoned all their political opponents - anti-communists who cannot be charged for their political understandings because according to the Turnovo and Dimitrov's Constitutions freedom of political understandings is assured. It is regretted that this is only in writing. In reality the communists find various pretenses: in the interest of the State Security, labor mobilization, etc., to evade the requirements of the constitution they get rid of these political workers. There are scores of such camps in Bulgaria, and according to the words of the militia Captain Krustyu GERSHANOV, chief of the guards of the Kutsiyan forced labor camp, Dimitrovo, Pernik, all political opponents of the communists will pass through this second school (the press) so that they be taught not to work in the future against the communist power. In these camps the inmates are kept for an indefinite period without being tried. State Security, which has sent them there, designates the period of time they are to serve there without pay and the director of the camp only gives an opinion if the punishment is to be increased if an inmate does not improve his attitude toward the communists. One of the many camps for anti-communists in Bulgaria is the "Kutsiyan" forced labor camp, Dimitrovo. It is situated near the open shafts of the coalmine, "7th September" or "Kutsiyan". The "Bogdanov Dol" and "Batanovtsi" forced labor camps are under the same administration. They are near Dimitrovo too. The inmates dig coal under ground, and make bricks in the first, and work in the tile factory in the second camp.

2. Kutsiyan camp is situated in the northern part of Dimitrovo, very close to the "7th September" or "Kutsiyan" Coal Mine. At the north east end the camp borders on a dense acacia forest, at the western end is the separating part of the mine through which the railroad Sofia - Petrich passes, and on the south the camp borders on the dining room and offices of the "7th September" Mine. Within the premises of the camp there are 8 buildings for the inmates, a small building with 4 offices where the management of the camp is (it is in the vegetable garden area of the camp.) There is a long, one-story building, the first one at the right from the main entrance which consists of two dormitories for the inmates. Next to it is another similar building in which the first room is the supply store

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and the second is a barber shop, shoe-and-tailor shop. The militiamen's mess and kitchen is in the third room and the members of the management have their meals there. The next building includes the dispensary, a hall for lectures with a library, and two rooms for the inmates. At the right there is another building with two other rooms for the inmates. In the north part of the camp are located the pig pen, the garage, the warehouse, the civilian clothes warehouse, an accounting office and carpenter shop. There is a refreshments booth and toilet between the carpentry shop and the last two inmates' quarters.

The camp is guarded by 30 - 60 militiamen; the number varies according to the number of inmates. Ordinarily there is one militiaman to every 25 inmates. The chief of the guards was militia Captain Krustov GERSHANOV, [redacted] At that time he was living in Dimitrovo (Pernik) in a place about 20 meters from the camp. He is a communist and is famous for his cruelty toward the inmates. [redacted]

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3. "In September 1947 [redacted] Kutsiyan camp the person in charge of the camp was SIMEONOV, [redacted]

[redacted] By the end of 1947 he was transferred to the forced labor camp at Nozharevo village, Tutrakan area. He was very cruel to the inmates. The newcomer he usually greeted by beating him. The educator of the camp was KHANDZHIYSKI, [redacted] in the camp and he was not transferred until the Kutsiyan camp was dissolved at the end of 1948 at which time he was appointed chief of the "Bogdanov Dol" camp. He was cruel, heartless, and hated the inmates.

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The administrative assistant of the camp was Peter INU, [redacted] [redacted] He didn't have much to do with the inmates but it was obvious he was a cruel communist.

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4. "There were two other men and a woman in the management. They were clerks. By the end of 1947 and beginning of 1948, SIMEONOV, was replaced. His replacement was KURTEV, fnu., [redacted]

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[redacted] He didn't seem to be bad. He made arrangements for the responsables of the groups to take turns to be on duty in the kitchen and the man on duty was not supposed to go that day to work but stay in the kitchen and watch whether all the food appropriated for the inmates is cooked for them. He also made arrangements for a football and volleyball play grounds so that those who had time could play. A Russian picture was shown and also the play "The Red Tie". Although he was a communist he was different from his predecessors in that he was more humane. The Administrative Personnel was housed in a newly built one-story building at a distance of about 20 meters from the entrance of the main entrance.

5. "The chief of all forced labor camps in Bulgaria was Militia (Colonel) MILENKOV, [redacted] The State Security inspector of Sofia who used to come to the camp to set inmates free was GESHKOV, [redacted] Another State Security inspector of Sofia performing the same functions was X FLOROV, [redacted]

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The life in the camp was monotonous and the work was heavy and tiresome. The food was frugal, elementary sanitary conditions were lacking and the thoughts of the most cruel communist head were applied to torture the inmates to a high degree. [redacted] during the years of 1947 and 1948 "Kutsiyan" had the most strict regime of all camps. At that time prominent political workers of the various anti-communist parties were there, and a great many of them were of the Bulgarian Agrarian People's Union - Nikola PETKOV. The communist administration wanted to frighten, threaten and shatter the strong anti-communist spirit of the inmates by subduing them by cruel, hard and inhumane living conditions. Luckily they did not succeed. On the contrary every inmate became a trained anti-communist. A very small percentage of the inmates were scared and to be set free earlier they committed themselves to the administration and spied on their friends.

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6. [redacted] living quarters were small, without sufficient air, and most unsanitary. [redacted]

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7. "There were rules for order in the camp which increased the possibilities for penalties because it was impossible to observe these special rules. It was worse when the responsible person of a group of inmates was a communist or served the communists because he would not

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conceal even the slightest violations of the discipline but would submit a report to the administrative staff for punishment, which followed immediately with great cruelty. They did not allow us to keep the windows of our sleeping quarters open at night lest someone might try to escape. Therefore the air was always bad. For toilet at night were used uncovered barrels in the corridor next to the room and the smell was coming in the room where we slept.

8. "The food in the camp was very frugal and unwholesome. Bread was the only item on which the inmates survived and they gave us the same ration, 1,050 grams, as they give the miners. The usual meal from September through December was cabbage every day and from December through April it was sauerkraut. During the other months we had spinach, peppers, tomatoes, potatoes, pumpkins, beans but everything was cooked in a very small quantity and with almost no fat. In the morning we had tea and very seldom white or yellow cheese. We were entitled to a miner's ration but it was far from being such. On the other hand our work was very heavy. Because of the food, the bad air and the heavy work after about six months every inmate was doomed to some kind of illness, such as inflamed glands, tuberculosis, etc. The conditions for a sick person were very bad. The latter would be sent to a hospital only if it is a hopeless case. During the period between 22 September 1947 to 8 September 1949 three of the inmates in the camp died. Later the procedure was changed in that when they saw someone is very ill and might die they would send him to a hospital or at home to die there. Asen VULEV, [redacted] of Nevrokop (Gotse Delchev) died in the camp. He was a member of the Bulgarian Agrarian People's Union - Nikola PETKOV. He was suffering of malignant ulcer and it was necessary for him to have a special diet, but because of the bad food, the cabbage and without any doctor's help, he died at the end of 1947 or the beginning of 1948.

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9. "Every inmate was entitled to receive a package each month with food to weigh not more than 5 kilograms together with the packing [redacted]

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if someone speaks against the administration, the Communists, or if someone tries to escape all the inmates were punished and deprived of receiving packages, letters, etc. in compliance with the collective responsibility rule in the camp. Thus in November and December 1947 [redacted] all deprived of receiving packages, letters, and [redacted] not allowed to see any outsiders because an inmate had fled. It is very often that the inmates are punished for any minor discrepancy, and then they receive no packages, no letters, they see no outsiders, they are sent to the torture chamber, are given penalty work, etc.

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11. "The only thing [ ] freely receive was money, even when an inmate was serving penalty. But usually the families of the inmates were materially ruined and therefore money was lacking in the camp. Prior to August 1947 attached to the BAPU-N. PETKOV were established were attached Aid Committees for helping the families of those who are in camps. After the Union was dissolved and all activists were arrested these committees discontinued their activities. [ ]

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12. "The work in Kutsiyan was very heavy particularly for the intellectuals who never before had performed physical work and then had to work as much as the qualified miners. [ ] worked in the open shafts and were divided in groups of 25 with a militiaman for each group as guard. [ ] made water outlet canals for the shafts, new track lay-outs, [ ] dug coal and cleaned and separated it from the earth. The norm for the primitive digging of coal was 9 tons per day per person. The older inmates were usually assigned to be responsible for the group when working in the shafts. The work in general was directed by a supervisor of the mine. The group responsible upon returning to the camp assigned work to each of the inmates of the group in the camp, was present at the distribution of the food to the group, and was responsible for every violation of the rules of the camp. Usually the administration appointed reliable responsables who would report every violation committed by the members of the group. If there was no such reliable person among the inmates the administration would appoint a versed person and secret helpers who do nothing else but spy on everyone separately and watch lest anyone might flee. For every three persons there was a "Yadrov" (nucleus) responsible for the work and eventual flight of the three inmates. The inmate had to ask permission for every place he went and wherever he was he was watched. When in the camp every inmate had to ask permission from the "yadrov", the group, and the secret responsible if he wanted to leave the dormitory and go to the lavatory, toilet, canteen, barber shop, or in the yard. The time passes with unbearable difficulty when the responsible is a reliable person to the administration because all violations of the rules are reported and there is a violation made every minute because the rules are very strict.

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13. [ ] worked 8 hours in the shafts with a recess of 30 minutes at 1000 hours. Then the inmates could have breakfast if they carried any food with them. In spite of the frugal food the inmates had to fulfill the norms of the ordinary miners. Moreover after returning from the shafts for luncheon at 1500 hours, at 1600 hours we had to work in the camp every day or sometimes every other day, as for example to water the garden, feed the pigs, carry sand, dig canals, wash the toilets, clean the grounds, etc. [ ] had work in the camp too until dinner time [ ]

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[ ] worked every day in the year except on 1 May, Easter, 9 September, and Christmas. Thus by heavy, incessant, everyday work, frugal food, unsanitary conditions of life, the Bulgarian Communists want to break the will of the anti-Communists in the camp, to fight against the Communists. Whether the latter would succeed is doubtful, but it has been proved that every inmate comes out of the camp a stronger anti-Communist and is careful lest he might fall again into the hands of the Communists. An escape from "Kutsiyan" is very difficult because of the guards and the secret sector, and "yadrov" responsables. At the end of 1947 a new comer of Sofia, member of the BAPU - N. PETKOV fled while working on the "separation project." According to rumors he has not been caught and he has been sending threatening letters to responsible Communist factors. In 1948 another inmate escaped from the Batanovtsi Camp. There, they say, the inmates were not so very well guarded, the buildings were not locked at night and the inmates were allowed to go out in the open to the toilet at night. Two anarchists fled. They had been in the camp for 25 months.

In the autumn of 1948 the miners stopped coming to work in the "Kutsiyan" mine because they were receiving low wages while the norms were higher than before. Thereafter the entire work in the mine was performed by the inmates of the camp. However, because the work is done in three shifts and because it is an open mine which gives a possibility for escape, the administration dissolved the "Kutsiyan" Camp probably by the end of 1948 or in the beginning of 1949 and the inmates were sent to other camps and their place was taken in the mine by trudovaks.

It is interesting that the authorities were not able to satisfy the demands of the miners and they refused to work in the "Kutsiyan" mine and elsewhere and this is one of the reasons why the need for coal in Bulgaria is so acute.

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